THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—The Voice of the Silence

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"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—

With December comes round the estival of Christmas, which the hristians celebrate as the Birthday f their Saviour. Many are not aware hat Christmas is of Pagan origin nd that the very early Christians id not celebrate this festival. As festival, Christmas was derived rom the Pagan world and began to e observed several centuries after he supposed birth of Jesus. Gibbon, n his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chronicles the birth of Christnas thus (II, p. 383):—

The Roman Christians, ignorant of he real date of the Christ's birth, xed the solemn festival on the 25th f December, the *Brumalia*, or Winter olstice, when the Pagans annually elebrated the birth of Sol.

It was the Birth of the Sun-God vhich the Pagans celebrated, and rom them the newer Christian devoees borrowed it to celebrate the irth of their Saviour. Gibbon is upported by a high ecclesiastical uthority. St. Chrysostom, who lived bout 390 A.D., has stated:—

On this day, also, the birth of Christ vas *lately* fixed at Rome, in order that whilst the heathen were busy with their *profane* ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed.

What were those "profane" ceremonies? The Birth of the Sun-God—the Egyptian Horus, the Babylonian Adonis, the Mexican Quetzalcoutl, the Aztec Huitzilopochtli, and many others. All were Sun-Gods born at the Winter Solstice and born of Virgin Mothers. The Christians in performing "their holy rites" borrowed from the Pagans and the Heathens. Even today Christmas festivities clearly point to some spiritual verities of the ancients; and among them all the most valuable to modern civilization is the truth about the Inner Birth of the Spirit of the Sun-God—the Divine Christos—in the heart of every pious and devout man and woman. He is a Christian who carries Christ within him, not he who only carries his body to a church.

The mission of Jesus (the real date of whose birth is not known) was the same as that of Buddha be-

fore Him. Jesus said to His hearers, "Ye are the light of the world" (St. Matthew, V. 14), repeating an instruction of His Illustrious Predecessor: "Be ye lamps, O Bhikkhus." St. John's Gospel refers to "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" and which is the Light of Christos. This is very reminiscent of the *Gita's* Light of Wisdom (XIII-17)—"In the hearts of all it ever presideth." The old Psalmist says, "Ye are gods and all of you are children of the most High" (*Psalm 82-6*). And Paul advises the Corinthians to "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit."

Our civilization takes little notice of the God which man is in *potentia*. His bodily powers, on which even his mental perceptions are made to lean, are falsely and exaggeratedly valued; and sense-living is glorified. Our morality is tarnished by this point of view. Many do not trace the prevailing sense of irresponsibility among people to this wrong teaching of scientific and materialistic psycho-philosophy. The talk of rights and the neglect of duties; the spirit of competition evolving as the greed for money, power and possessions; the crass selfishness and egotism and other ills which flourish today; and the most feared of all—War, their apotheosis; these make for the death of the Soul.

Only a few recognize, even intellectually, the possibility of Second-Birth. And yet everyone admires the spirit of sacrifice, the ideal of simple living and noble thinking and generosity of body and mind. Christmas is the festival of Second-Birth. If not in reality and experience, at least as an idea it should be recognized. That man can be born again while the body is alive in the mundane world should be thought of.

Christmas is observed as a holiday even in India, and it is right that it should be, but its observance should not be merely merry-making, though Joy—Ananda is of the essence of Second-Birth. The clue to that deeper and real Bliss is primarily in the knowing, to begin with theoretically, that man carries Divinity in the recesses of his heart. Each is a Christ, a Buddha, a Krishna. That Divinity is "nearer unto man than his own jugular vein," says the *Koran*. But:—

> Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them! Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent!

Right perception of all things means evaluating them correctly; not as the world does, seeing value in shades and shadows, fancying reality where it does not exist.

To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul.

SHRAVAKA

THE GURU CULT

[**Shri K. G. Mashruwala** has been a devotee of Gandhiji for many years. t present he is serving the Motherland as Editor of Gandhiji's weekly, *Harijan*, nd in other ways. In this paper, prepared for the Silver Jubilee Sessions of he Indian Philosophical Congress to be held at the end of this month, Shri Iashruwala raises an issue of utmost importance related to the inner life of helas and sadhakas—disciples and devotees. He rejoices us by his fearless riticism of the sentimental and emotional attitude of so many who fancy hemselves to be treading the path of devotion. Gandhiji himself has said: 'I must therefore warn all against accepting imperfect ones as *gurus*. It is etter to grope in the dark and wade through a million errors to Truth than to ntrust oneself to one who 'knows not that he knows not.'"

But who is a true *guru?* Gandhiji said: "I believe in the Hindu theory f *guru* and its importance in spiritual realization. I think there is a great deal f truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a *guru*. An mperfect teacher in mundane affairs may be tolerable, but not so in spiritual natters. Only a perfect *gnani* (a knowing one, a seer) deserves to be enthron-d as *guru*."

This doctrine is very similar to the teaching of the greatest of modern Theosophists, H. P. Blavatsky, and her attitude was once well exemplified. When an ardent young Hindu fell at her feet and called her "guru," H. P. Blavatsky said: "I am no guru. They are not of this world. I am but a poor window through which a little of the Light of the true Gurus comes." Indeed, correct is the old instruction of the *Gita* which describes the real Mahatma as very difficult to find.—ED.]

In a note on Shri Ramana Maharshi's *Nirvana*, I wrote in *Harijan* (23-4-50):—

There are several disciples who worship him as God in human form nd there is a danger that they might stablish a regular religious sect in his ame. This is an unhappy develop-ent of the Hindu religious movement. andhiji resisted such deification of mself....

Now, after Shri Ramana Maharshi's mmersion in the Infinite Life, I hope s disciples will study him and try to tain the same realization which he had, rather than spend their energies in deifying him. Let us remember that *to deify a Jnani is to defy Jnana.*

A correspondent took objection to the last sentence. He cited the authority of scriptures and celebrated *jnanis* (seers) and devotees to show that my criticism was against the doctrines of Vedanta and betrayed my ignorance of the system of discipline (*sādhanā*) for self-realization. He contended that my statement would have been objected to even by Gandhiji, whose morning

prayer included the famous verse: "*Gururbrahma, Gururvishnur,...*"

It is probable that there are several others who hold the same views as my correspondent. For it is clear that my view does not accord with the traditional Hindu attitude towards the Guru. It is proposed to discuss this question here at some length. I request the reader to regard the reference to Shri Ramana Maharshi as accidental. For that eminent sage, I always entertained high personal respect, and I regarded him as a great and noble seer of our times. The present discussion is general and irrespective of any particular person.

Hindu religious literature is full of such aphorisms as "There is no higher deity than the Guru"; "The Guru is the ultimate Truth and Deity"; "God and *Avatāras* (incarnations) are secondary to the Guru in importance"; "There is no higher refuge, no higher target, no higher destination than the Guru"; "The Guru is God himself"; "God and the Guru are one"; "He who makes a distinction between the Guru and God is ignorant and stupid"; and scores of other similar ones. They abound both in Sanskrit and in the modern Indian languages. Among their authors could be included some celebrated philosopher-saints. Jnandev, Eknath and many others all over India have, in their various books, offered their first salutations to the Guru.

I myself was brought up in the same tradition. I was born in the Swaminarayana sect and remained its follower for 30 years. It is a Guru cult, *i.e.*, believes in the worship of the Guru as the Supreme Deity. Indeed, formally, the books of the sect put forth Krishna as the recognized Deity for its followers and its temples are dedicated to the idols of Lakshmi-Narayana, Radha-Krishna, etc. But, along with these deities, there will always be found also idols of Swami Sahajananda, the founder of the sect, and its truly faithful followers will always declare that Krishna and others were secondary in importance to Swaminarayana himself. Swaminarayana is addressed and looked upon as the *Avatari* of all *Avatāras* (the Causer of incarnations), the Purushottama beyond the perishable (*kshara*) and the imperishable (*akshara*), and the lord of *Akshara Dhama* (the Imperishable Abode). This creed is not a peculiarity of the Swaminarayana sect. There might be in India at least a score of similar sects of fairly good size and more than a hundred small ones.

When I could not get full enlightenment from the contemporary divines of the Swaminarayana sect I contacted one who enlightened me further, cleared the cobwebs from my understanding and guided my progress. But, tradition-bound as my mind was, I put my Guru's photograph in place of Swaminarayana's picture and began to worship it. He did not suggest or encourage this, but he had to put up with my practice for some time. Later, with

better understanding, I gave it up. Till this day I have the highest regard for and devotion to my Guru and our relations are as cordial as they ought to be between a Guru and his grateful disciple. It is not difficult for me to understand such texts as, "God, the Guru and the Self are one." But with all that in the background I raise my voice against the practice of deifying the Guru. I do so after mature deliberation.

A very peculiar feature has developed in the Hindu Vedanta. I regard it as an unhealthy and disfiguring pathological change in its constitution. If a person can convince himself that he has realized the Self, or has an admirer who believes that he has done so, the Hindu Vedanta opens up for him the way to the founding of a new sect based on Guru worship. Our masses, too, have developed a curious credulousness. Often they will install an earnest seeker and devotee or a pious saint on the throne of God and begin to offer him worship and homage even if he protests and resists such acts. They will lie prostrate, sing hymns, wave lights (*ārti*) and burn incense before him, present to him food which is to be returned by him as *prasāda*, wash his feet and sip the water. At times the disciple will go to the length of getting food, fruit or a betel-nut leaf, chewed by him and then take the morsel back from him. They will place his photograph in the private shrines of their homes and perform all those rites and ceremonies which are usually offered to temple-idols. In this way there may be at present in our country scores of individuals who are worshipped as the living God, with a following varying from 10 to a lakh.

Parallel to the Guru cult is the *Avatāra* cult, also a feature peculiar to Hinduism. The basis for the Guru cult is a person's *jnana* (spiritual realization); that for the *Avatāra*, his uncommon, heroic leadership of the people. The *Gita* having specifically laid down that it is one of the functions of God to take human (or other) form for the rescue of the world from evil forces, a great and successful leader of the people at a time of depression and distress is looked upon as such an *Avatāra*.

The deification of the Guru or the *Avatāra* in this manner is not to be found in any other religion. It does not mean that no follower of other religions has ever perceived the Truth proclaimed by the *Advaita Vedanta*. And, as to heroes, who will doubt that every country has produced as great saviours of the people as India? There have been many *Sufis* in Islam, who have been perfect *Advaitists*. In Christianity, too, there have been as many schools of philosophy as in the *Vedanta*, on the question of the nature of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and their relations *inter se*. But Christianity seems to have accepted the convention that, barring Jesus Christ, no other individual is to be recognized as the Son of God or his

equal. Islam rejects Sonship, but recognizes prophets. Past prophets could not be rejected because of the previous scriptures and traditions and, theoretically, prophets might be born in every age and country. But there appears to be an unwritten, tacit understanding in Islam, that the status of prophet is not to be extended to any individual after Mohammad, the last prophet. Similarly, the Parsis have not had a prophet since Zarathustra, the Buddhists a Buddha since Siddhartha, or the Jains a Tirthankara since Mahavira.*

All these religions have produced a great many saints, *mahatmas* and *jnanis*. If these had been born in Vedic Hinduism, in all probability they would have been deified in the same way as the founders of several Vedic sects.

For, in this respect, a good deal of chaos prevails in Vedic Hinduism. It has an ever-increasing number of *Avatāras* and Gurus installed as God Himself, with the support and sanction of scriptures and teachings of saints and *jnanis*. My denunciation of the practice might, therefore, be considered as rashness bordering upon heresy. It might also be regarded as harmful, as it might cause doubt and confusion in the minds of some seekers (*Sādhaks*), who strive with simple faith and earnestness to practise the discipline for enlightenment and self-development. Nevertheless, humbly, seriously and definitely, I submit that this application of the Vedanta philosophy is erroneous and improper. It has been instrumental in spreading sophistry and delusion in the guise of philosophy and direct realization, and must be abandoned. I should like to apply here the *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad*, which says:—

> Into blinding darkness enter those who cling to ignorance, but into still deeper darkness go those who flirt with knowledge.

It is promotion of nescience with the help of scholarship, to justify the worship of a mortal in lieu of God. It makes no difference whether God is conceived as clothed with attributes (*saguna*) or as absolute, attributeless existence (*nirguna*).

"The soul is verily the Brahma itself" is a true statement indeed; but it is true in respect to every being and not only in the case of him who has realized the truth of it. That is to say, the *ajnani* (unawakened) and the *jnani* are both Brahma. But no one worships an unawakened person as God. An earnest devotee might bow to every being, respect it in the name of God, regard it as a form of the Lord and serve it. But he makes a distinction between an object of respect and service and an object of worship and meditation. Even so we should discriminate between a *jnani Guru* and God; and also between a hero

* I am aware that Shri Rajachandra of Gujarat, a modern Jain seer, is looked upon by a few followers as a new Tirthankara. I doubt, however, whether he will be given that recognition by Jains in general.

(*Avatāra*) and God. This distinction has been lost sight of in Vedic Hinduism.

There are two reasons for this: *Saguna Upāsanā* (contemplation of the Divine as clothed with attributes) is found in all religions, including the non-theistic ones. Some of them even clothe the Divine with a form. But the opposite word, *nirguna* (attributeless), which is used in Vedanta for suggesting the *Absolute* (devoid of form and attributes) is not employed in any other religious philosophy. I feel that the use of the word *Nirguna* in the Vedanta philosophy has given rise to much misunderstanding. Instead of characterizing Brahma by negative terms, as devoid of form, attributes or activity, it would have been better and truer if it were said that it is the seed, the source, the nucleus or the foundation of all forms, attributes, activities and specific awareness or knowledge.

Because, in truth, Brahma *is* the support and substratum of the infinite and innumerable forms, forces and energies—the spiritual as well as the so-called material—which have been, which are, or which will come into existence in this vast universe. Brahma is greater than all Its animate, inanimate, tangible and intangible manifestations put together, along with their powers and potentialities. It is not only the sum total of all the powers and forms that are at this moment, but also those which might be still latent and unmanifested. We do not know even all those which may be in existence but are not discovered by man. Much less can we guess those which might be concealed in Its womb.

Seen thus, the greatest *Jnani*, *Mahatma*, or *Avatāra*, is only a tiny ray or faint glimpse of God. Thus, we can understand with greater clarity the following verses of the *Gita*:—

> Whatever is glorious, beautiful and mighty, know thou, that each such has issued from a fragment of my splendour ....with but a part of Myself, I stand upholding this universe. (X. 41-42)

Any concrete manifestation of Brahma, any name or form perceivable by our senses, or conceivable by the mind, is indeed God, *i.e.*, wholly and fully Brahma; but what we perceive is only an infinitesimal part of Its revealed powers and what we conceive is a tiny fragment of Its infinite potentialities. In this sense no being, however enlightened, is the whole of It. To worship a part as the whole is not correct.

Let us consider this from the point of view of human perfection also. We cannot say of any individual that humanity has attained in him such an acme of perfection as has not been and never will be reached by any other human being. There is an anecdote of Buddha thus: Once his disciple Ananda told him that he was certain that none of the past Buddhas had attained, none of his own time possessed, and none in future would reach the perfection of Siddhartha Gautama.

Thereupon the Buddha smiled and said that, since Ananda could measure the degrees of perfection of all the present, past and future Buddhas, the *prajna* (power of judgment) of Ananda himself must be higher than his (Buddha's) own and that of all the Buddhas! The reproach is very apposite.

But the worship of the Guru as God requires the devotee to attribute all perfection to him, so that his faith in him might remain unshakable and strong. But this attribution is unnatural and not based on Truth. At one instant the disciple contemplates that aspect of the Guru which is absolute and beyond his body; at another moment he worships, eulogizes and contemplates his physical form, his earthly life, his actions, his behaviour, etc. This double worship has to be resorted to because the books of Vedanta and the sayings and hymns of saints, gurus and disciples ask us to make no distinction between God and Guru, or between *saguna* and *nirguna*. They teach that, without belief in the complete identity of God and the Guru, there can be no perfect devotion to the latter; without such devotion, one cannot be the recipient of the "Guru's grace"; without grace, one cannot attain *jnana;* without *jnana*, no salvation; and, without salvation, no liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

All these teachings are partly sound and partly not. There are two ways of regarding the nature and function of Brahma. One is, that it is the essential nature of Brahma to exist eternally and manifest Itself continually in manifold and diverse forms or energies, and, if the individual being is Brahma Itself, who is to be liberated from the cycle of births and deaths? And how? If it is an eternal Truth that Brahma and I are one, it does not matter in the least whether I have known—discovered within myself—that Truth or not, so far as liberation from births and deaths is concerned. My realization—discovery—will change my attitude towards life and the universe and towards the phenomena of births and deaths, and make me indifferent towards the latter. It should also relax my attachment to my individuality and weaken the fond desire or belief generally found among human beings that their individuality should be or is maintained after death. But, so far as the law of births and deaths is concerned, there can be no difference between an unrealized being and me. The knowledge of Truth would change also the course of evolution of the faculties of the intellect and higher sentiments in me. The function of the Guru is to enable me to discover for myself the Truth of the identity of Brahma and myself.

The other way of looking at the nature of Brahma is, in appearance, diametrically opposite to this. According to it, Brahma has nothing to do with the manifestation of the Universe, which is only a play of *Prakriti* (Nature), as the Sankhyas

say, or of *Maya* (a mysterious illusion), as the Vedantins maintain. Brahma comes in as the inactive, unattached, attributeless witness to the play of *Prakriti*. The function of the Guru is to lead the disciple to the realization—self-discovery—of this absolute and detached existence of the Spirit within him and his own identity with It, and to bring about the dissolution of the false identity which has got established between *Prakriti* or *Maya* and his true self. This dissolution is necessary for ending the play of *Prakriti*, which enacts the cycle of births and deaths.

Whichever may be the approach, it is clear that the function of the Guru is to enable the disciple to make certain discoveries for himself. Doing so involves not only clear and fine thinking, but also purity of mind, development of virtues and noble sentiments, and some kind of *sādhanā* or practice of *yoga*. Not all are qualified for it. For this the disciple stays under the eye of the Guru. And one day he finds himself and the Guru at that psychological juncture when some utterance or gesture of the Guru, which he had often known before, takes on a new meaning, gives him a new flash of light and takes him at once to the point of self-discovery. This he naturally hails as the descent of the "Guru's grace." It might happen that the disciple might have already acquired the previous qualifications elsewhere, before he found his final Guru. It might also happen that, unknown to himself, he had already discovered the Truth and it might have been left to the Guru only to confirm his discovery. To such disciples the moment of discovery is also the descent of the grace.

But normally, and in its full course, "to receive the grace" of the Guru is to receive instructions and guidance from time to time in the practice of *sādhanā* for the realization of the Truth, and to get a solution of the difficulties and doubts encountered by the disciple in his endeavours. The Guru can "bestow this grace"—that is, undertake to instruct and guide the disciple and to take interest in him—only if the latter proves his worthiness, by faith, service, a keen spirit of enquiry, diligence, humility, self-restraint and other sterling virtues of head and heart.

> The masters of knowledge who have seen the Truth will impart to thee this knowledge; learn it by humble salutation, repeated questioning and *Seva i.e.*, service of the Master and constant practice of his instructions. (IV. 34).

It does not mean a magical touch of the Guru transforming the disciple into a *jnani* "in less time," as is often said, "than it would take an expert horseman to put the first foot in the stirrup." The proving of the disciple's worthiness does not involve worship and devotion in the form of offering flowers, incense, hymns of praise, etc., to the Guru's person or image. Serving a Master with faith and devotion is not the same thing as

worshipping him or his picture with ritualistic ceremonies. *Upāsanā* (literally, sitting near) or discipleship consists in attentively and intelligently listening to the Guru's teachings, demonstrating a relentless quest of truth, obeying meticulously the Guru's instructions and commands, getting clarification of one's doubts, rendering such personal service to him as, for instance, a dutiful son would render to his father, and, if the Guru has a mission, taking a full part therein as his assistant.

It is this *upāsanā* which qualifies a disciple to take a seat near the Guru. It is only through such *upāsanā* that an aspirant may attain the same realization as the Guru. This *upāsanā* is quite different from the *upāsanā* of the Guru which involves worshipping him like a temple-god, propagating a new faith in his name and putting him forward as a divine incarnation. The way to Truth requires abandonment of preconceptions and prejudices and the readiness to receive unexpected shocks to some of our fondly held beliefs. It does not consist in transferring worship and loyalty from a former God to a new man-God.

The replacement of the formless God by the Sun, of the Sun by an image of Vishnu, this in turn by that of Narayana, Rama, Krishna and others, and then the abandonment of these in favour of the original founder of one's religious sect, and of him in favour of the new Guru or his image, and working for the spread of his cult, does not help a devotee to achieve spiritual progress. It only adds to the number of sects, each feeling jealous of the others.

From activities like these arise fruitless discussions about the relative values of different *Avatāras*, some being classed as full *Avatāras*, and others as partial, and of Gurus, each sect regarding its own Guru as having reached the 7th stage, which others had failed to attain. At times, followers of the same Guru start more than one sect. This activity has proved a great disintegrating force in Indian Society, dividing it into small groups. The same mentality has worked in the sphere of political and social activities.

But my objection to this form of worship is not on the ground that it results in the disintegration of society, but because at its base there are misinterpretation and misapprehension of *jnana*.

There is an additional cause for the spread of this indiscriminate practice. It is usual among Hindus to christen individuals after the names of gods and *Avatāras*. For instance, Ishwara, Bhagwan, Rama, Krishna, Narayana, Shankara, Shambhu, etc., are not only names of Brahma and recognized *Avatāras* or Gods. Any person may be so named. Among Christians, I believe, no one may be christened Jesus, and no one in Islam, Allah or Khuda. Consequently, in a *Nama-smarana* or *Dhun* (repetition of holy names) where words like Allah, Khuda, Jehovah, Lord, God, etc., are utter-

ed, it is not difficult to understand that the name uttered refers to God and none else. If Jesus and Mohammad are mentioned, they could not be understood as synonyms of God. But when names like Raghupati, Raghav, Rajaram, Sitaram, Krishna, Mohan, Murari, Radhakrishna, Samba, Sadashiv, are uttered and to them are added names of Lakshman, Hanuman and others, not only Christians and Muslims but even Arya Samajis hesitate to participate in such *Dhuns*.

Questions are raised as to whom these names stand for, and a double clarification is attempted, Christians, Muslims, Arya Samajis and the like will be told that the words Raghupati, Sita, Radhakrishna, etc., should not be taken as referring to the historical or puranic figures known by those names but only as synonyms of Allah, God, Brahma, Paramatma and the like. But orthodox followers with deep devotion towards these *Avatāras*, would be told that they certainly refer to the traditional Rama, Krishna and others, the worship of whom in lieu of God is not tabooed.

Devotees do not recite with the same understanding *Dhuns* in which names like Nivritti, Jnandev, Sopan, Tukaram, etc., occur and those in which names like Raghupati, Raghava, Rajaram, etc., are repeated. They know full well that in the first type there is an enumeration of saints but, in the other series, they associate God with those names because, according to them, the personages representing those names were incarnations of God. But as this belief is not shared by others, intellectual gymnastics have to be resorted to, to satisfy the latter. These, however, remain unconvinced and hesitate to join in the recital of Hindu *Nam Dhuns*.

Possibly, originally, the word "Om" represented and was repeated as the symbol of the Absolute (*nïrguna*) Brahma, and the Sun was Its best concrete (*saguna*) form. From these developed, in course of time, two branches of worship. In one, *Om*, though originally *nirguna*, got transformed into one concrete (*saguna*) conception after another—Brahma, Shiva, Ganapati and other Smārta forms. In the other, the worship of the Sun got transformed into that of Indra, Vishnu, Vāmana, Virāta (Trivikrama) and other Vaishnava forms. Later on, rulers also were given designations such as Indra, Vishnu, etc. Great personalities came to be worshipped as incarnations of Shiva or of Vishnu. Then came the discovery of the non-duality of the Individual Spirit and Paramatma, as indicated by the great aphorisms: "Thou art That," "I am Brahma," etc. This development led to the worship of the Guru. Thus one conception led to another, along with various gradations and hypotheses regarding life after death, the heavenly abode, etc.

This has brought about such chaos that a person who can manage to secure a few disciples and can talk about "Thou art That" and "I am

Brahma," can set himself up as "God Incarnate."

The habit of deifying the Guru should stop. I say this as one who himself respects his Guru as any disciple should, and who holds Gandhiji in no less esteem than Rama, Krishna, Christ or Mohammad.

Our faith, allegiance and worship should be restricted to God alone. No symbol and no manifestation may represent Him. He is the subject of a creed, a faith, based on a supreme realization, potentially available to everyone. But it is actually not clear to everyone, and so, for those to whom it is not clear, it is a creed accepted on simple faith. Moreover, the realization is not perfectly explicable in words, by symbols or by analogy, even by those who have attained it, whether clearly or faintly. No imagined God or image may represent or stand for Him. None may be regarded as His incarnation, or son, or messenger, however greatly he may enlighten the path leading to Him. All such are only Buddhas, Tirthankaras, Gurus, *i. e.*, seers and teachers; but none may be regarded as omniscient and infallible, or as in his own person representing God fully and perfectly.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

"THE CHILDREN ARE OUR HOPE"

The Office of Education in the United States Federal Security Agency has a Division of International Educational Relations—an example which other countries might well emulate. One of their publications, the last in the 1949 series, is *World Understanding Begins with Children*, an illustrated brochure, full of suggestions for the fostering of international understanding at the elementary school level. The importance to world unity, and also to peace, of early attitudes is great. "Learning to appreciate and respect the individual wherever he is" and to co-operate with each other is the foundation on which mutual appreciation and respect between peoples can be built, as also readiness to co-operate for world objectives. Helping children to realize similarities between their own and other people's lives, to understand the reasons for the differences in costumes and in customs, and to appreciate the interdependence of peoples lends itself to many different approaches, along the line of children's special interests, but is tremendously worth while.

The promotion of mutual understanding between groups in the same nation is an important aspect of fostering world understanding. It may be easier to feel brotherly towards people at the Antipodes than towards our neighbour of another race or faith but the cultivation of mutual sympathy at home would seem to be a logical first step to world citizenship, an aspect of the problem which in this bulletin is hardly touched upon. Negro-white relations in the United States, Hindu-Muslim relations in India and Pakistan, could be vastly improved by teaching inspired by a living faith in universal brotherhood.

THE MARCH OF GOD

[**Dr. Josiah Oldfield,** veteran champion of vegetarianism and founder of the British Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, since long the Earnshaw-Cooper Lecturer in Dietetics to the Lady Margaret Fruitarian Hospital, Sittingbourne, is convinced that mankind is progressing. A claim for straight-line progress for the individual or for the race can hardly be defended, yet both individual and race may be pursuing a spiral course which, in spite of declining now and then, tends ever upward.—ED.]

Amongst the great troubles that affect the human mind is a disease called Melancholy, or, as it is sometimes termed, Despair. Those who have to deal with mental patients or have charge of large mental hospitals, sadly learn of the high percentage of people who are affected more or less severely with disorders of the mind connected with loss of Hope, with Despair and with Melancholy.

One of the commonest early manifestations of such disordered minds is the belief that the world was better in their grandfather's time than it is today. There are large masses of men and women who are fully convinced that in the past was a greater state of happiness for mankind than in the present. Upon this basis they build up their views of ordinary life and eventually drift towards a mental condition which makes them believe that the farther the world goes the more it will become beset with snares for the feet and darkness and clouds and hopeless fogs for the mind. From this they pass on to spiritual hopelessness which is the worst form of Melancholia.

It is for us, then, who profess to have made some researches into the Arcana of life's mysteries to light up the pathway of the future, and, by looking backward, to demonstrate from the history of the ages that God's plan for the Universe has been one long progressive march.

I may go out in the evening and watch the moon, and see the clouds forming and shutting it off from time to time, and I may say in my ignorance, "The moon is standing still, I see no motion in it whatsoever." I go back again after a few hours and look in the same portion of the sky and find that it is not there. The planet has progressed upon her appointed way. Although her progress may be obscured, it is never hindered.

I am called in to see a patient with a serious wound. I may sit and watch this patient for an hour at a time and, in my ignorance, say, "There is no change in the wound." If, however, I put a dressing upon it and tell the patient to come back in a week's time, I shall then learn the truth of the wise saying of the great surgeon Ambroise Pare: "*Le*

médecin donne la médecine. Les gardes-malades affixent les pansements. Mais c'est le bon Dieu qui guérit."

If there is one thing that we have learned during these latter ages from a study of the human race and its history over millions of years, it is that the plan of God is one progressive march. Verily then it is with hymns in our hearts, gladness in our eyes and joyous melody upon our tongues, that we may look upon such apparent disorders as the coming of the Huns and the Goths over Europe, the invasion of the Mongols from Asia, the little tin Gods who lighted up the sky. The coming of men like Tamarlane or Alexander the Great or Philip of Macedonia or Napoleon of Corsica or Hitler of Germany has produced but temporary setbacks in the steady progress of human development.

No one who has ever attempted to climb a mountain has failed to be temporarily depressed when he found his pathway led him downwards instead of upwards. Every mountain climber sooner or later learns the lesson that, although sometimes he may be going down he is always finding himself on a higher and higher plane, until the coveted mountain top is gained.

For those who hear the voices of the past, for those that have eyes to see through the mists of antiquity, for those who can translate the cries of the oppressed and the groans of the tortured ones, there is nothing but gladness in the recognition of the progress, unhindered and unhinderable, from the Dust to Paradise.

One may read of the horrors of the Thirty Years' War that brought unutterable misery and poverty and even cannibalism amongst the peasants of Europe. One may read of the horrible massacre of the Jews in the Hitler wars. One may sympathize with the pathetic grief and hopelessness of slaves in their slavery and of prisoners in their dungeons, but these things are like the clouds over the moon. The human race is progressing towards the heavenly knowledge, and the earthly enjoyment of happiness and comprehensive brotherhood and sympathy.

In my own life, which is as that of a grain of sand upon the seashore, I have seen the position of women, for example, entirely altered in Western countries. Whereas before hunger and under-nutrition carried off thousands, today, famine is practically unknown.

Previously plagues and diseases took their toll every Spring, and all such deaths were laid upon the will of God; today, God's Will, working through human intelligence, has taught the secret of the effect of the lack of such simple things as vitamins. For thousands of years, sailors took it for granted that scurvy was the lot of every man when he went upon the waters. It was not until patient, god-searching men discovered that a basket of lemons, or a saucepanful of asparagus, or a dishful of fresh lettuces added to seamen's diet would prevent and

cure all that tribe of diseases which go under the name of Scurvies and which arise from the lack of fresh fruits and greens in the diet.

My friend Gandhi has many times said in public that he believed that in the hands of God there could be found some cure for every ailment.

Little by little do all great thinkers recognize that the world progresses through discovery, hallowed by sympathy; fresh fields are ever being found wherein man can live in greater health, greater happiness and continued youth.

To me, one of the greatest secrets which is yet to be read by the blind world, is that life comes only from life, that he who thinks to retain life by killing, will sooner or later find that the pathway of the lion and the tiger does not parallel the road of evolution that leads to Paradise.

The Divine Command was published and is engraved upon every human baby when it is born, namely, God said: "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed,...and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

The prevention and cure of all Despair and all Melancholy lie in the understanding of the sound of the March of God.

JOSIAH OLDFIELD

ENGLISH IN INDIAN EDUCATION

Encouragingly for those who would deplore the weakening of India's cultural ties, Bombay's Chief Minister, Shri B. G. Kher, declaring open on November 1st an exhibition of British books and periodicals organized by the British Council, urged that Indians study the English language and British thought as "one of the important cultural streams of the modern world." Objective evaluation was now possible of the intellectual and cultural gains from the British impact, and Indians, he declared, had "an adequate appreciation of the advantages of retaining English as a living language in the country," for higher cultural and educational purposes as well as for international contacts. There is little danger of English being undervalued at the university level; but, unless it is retained as a compulsory subject in secondary schools, will there be the facility in its use required both for higher studies and for free interchange of thought between India and the outside world?

PATRICK GALLAGHER

VOICE OF RURAL CO-OPERATION

[**Mr. R. M. Fox** of Dublin, the author of numerous books on Irish history, on travel and on industrial problems from the human angle, has contributed many articles to our pages, including studies of his great countrymen, Dr. Douglas Hyde and Arthur Griffith, linking the latter's name with that of Gandhiji, both being "Prophets of National Self-Reliance." He writes here of the heartening career of Patrick Gallagher and of a triumph of co-operation under very adverse circumstances, which holds a promise of amelioration through co-operative effort of the condition of the under-privileged elsewhere.—ED.]

Sometimes the life of a man becomes an epitome of the struggles of his people. So it has been with Patrick Gallagher, who, as a barefoot Irish peasant lad, spent his early years in a wild, mountainous corner of West Donegal. His people lived in a one-roomed house thatched with straw and their little patch of fertile land was reclaimed from the mountain. Born on December 25th, 1873, he was one of a family of 9 children, 7 of them girls. Like the neighbours, this family was wretchedly poor. Their most valuable possession was one cow. Their single cow provided milk for the family except for 3 months in the year when they were given milk by their neighbours. They did the same for the others in time of need. This was a practical lesson in the value of co-operation. There were 23 families living in Cleendra on the side of the mountain.

With this beginning it seemed that Patrick was destined to live and die in obscurity. Instead, as "Paddy the Cope," he has achieved nation-wide fame and plans are being made to put his life-story into a film. He is the most powerful personality in his area. As the manager and inspirer of the Templecrone Co-operative Society, which has an annual turnover of £100,000, he holds the economic threads of the townland in his hands. The society has branched into every kind of productive and trading activity. It has its hosiery factory, its bakery, its mill, its electricity supply, its mining interests, its own transport by land and sea. One of his latest enterprises is to take up fishing by trawler. Yet the corner of Ireland where all this activity has gone on was poverty-stricken and sparsely populated. His co-operative society started with 14 half-crowns which represented a real sacrifice for the people who subscribed them.

His own story begins long before there was any co-operative movement in Dungloe, the nearest town to the village of Cleendra. Of course the family holding of rough mountain land could not support a large family

so, when he was 10 years old, Patrick took his bundle and set out bare-foot to walk 37 miles to the hiring fair at Strabane to offer himself for farm-work. He joined a group of lads and servant-girls clustered at the fair waiting for farmers to come along and bargain for them as they did for cattle and sheep. Patrick was hired by a farmer for £3 and his keep, for 6 month's work. When his business was finished the farmer came riding on his horse through the fair and the boy had to trot after him for 14 miles till they reached home. Now and then the farmer slowed up his horse, so as not to overtire it, which gave the lad the opportunity of catching up. He fell asleep on a stool by the fire in the farm kitchen but was shaken roughly by the farmer's wife who told him to get to bed so as to be up early in time for work in the morning. His supper was a bowl of tea and a piece of bread, his bed an attic where he could not stand upright. For six months he toiled on the farm and in the house. Then he returned home for a spell before being hired out again.

When he was 16 he went to Scotland, still working for farmers. Later he worked in the Scottish coal-mines. During one of his visits home he married Sally, the daughter of a neighbour as poor as himself. Both went off to Scotland, where he returned to the mines. They joined the West Calder Co-operative Society. Sally began saving up her dividend with the intention of returning to Donegal and buying a small farm. Patrick advanced in the mines for he was given charge of a group of miners. Sally went back home to her parents with the Co-op deposit book. At last they earned enough to buy a small farm at Cleendra and the neighbours had a great night welcoming them in.

So far the story is only that of an industrious couple who had a modest success. But Patrick broke new ground—in a double sense—when he decided to get a plough. It was the first plough ever used on the rocky soil of Cleendra and it created a sensation. Sometime after this, G. W. Russell ("A.E.") visited Dungloe. Besides being a poet and a philosopher he was also a co-operative organizer and—standing on the rising ground—he talked about the advantages to the farmers of having their own co-operative bank. Under a Congested Districts Board scheme, he told them, they could get a grant of £50 if they made a start. Several local merchants promised £5, for it was generally understood between them that they kept things in their own hands. But then Patrick Gallagher offered £5 too. The merchants proceeded to elect each other on the Committee and "A.E." suggested that the farmers should be represented. With some reluctance they added Patrick's name to the list.

The next thing that happened was that the Department of Agriculture issued leaflets suggesting that the farmers should use a certain kind of fertilizer. But the merchants would

only stock the kind they had ordered before. When Patrick suggested that the Agricultural Bank might advance money to buy these fertilizers the merchants said this would interfere with their legitimate trade. Patrick saw the price list for the recommended fertilizers supplied by the Irish Agricultural Organization Society and was amazed at the extortion practised by local merchants. So he asked his farmer neighbours to subscribe the money needed and placed an order with the I.A.O.S. That Society informed him that they could supply only a local society, not individuals. The merchants at once circulated the story that Patrick was trying to cheat his fellow small farmers out of their money. The police visited Cleendra and tried to get one of his neighbours to lay information against Patrick so that they could arrest him. But his neighbours stood firm and drove the police out of the place.

After much trouble Patrick succeeded in getting the fertilizers ordered through a society in Donegal town but they had to bring them in by water from Burtonpoint. Most of the farmers were in debt to the local shopkeepers so they didn't dare have their goods come through the town by rail. And the cost of the fertilizer was 7/5 per bag while in the merchants' store it cost 12/6. This was the first shot in the campaign for agricultural co-operation. Fourteen small farmers decided on the spot to put down 2/6 each to start a local society free of all control by the merchants.

This meant that the war was on. The local "gombeen men" who charged big prices for inferior goods set out to smash this impertinent attempt to rescue the small farmers from their clutches. Patrick Gallagher was elected President of the newly-formed Templecrone Co-operative Society. Ever since he has been known throughout the district as "Paddy the Cope," an easy Irish way of saying "Co-op." They began to get tea and sugar from the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society and, after a while, decided to pack and grade their eggs instead of selling them to the local dealers.

When they ordered their first consignment of tea and sugar they knew so little about business that they had no scales to weigh their goods. Fortunately these articles were done up in half-pound and pound packets. The first batch of eggs they packed arrived at its destination smashed up and was a total loss. But "Paddy the Cope" himself went away for two months to learn the business of packing and grading. Another difficulty was that farmers' wives were terrified to sell eggs to the Co-op, as they were heavily in debt to the merchants.

A campaign of slander was started against Patrick Gallagher and the Co-op. This Donegal district was strongly Nationalist and Catholic. So the merchants spread the rumour that the Co-op was Protestant and Unionist. Their hall was described as the "New Orange Hall"—a dead-

ly insult. Sir Horace Plunkett, who was a Unionist as well as a pioneer of co-operation, came to speak at their Annual Meeting and his coming loosed a flood of insults and attacks. Then Father Finlay, S. J.,—a noted priest and strong co-operator—visited them and the critics were confounded.

Patrick Gallagher was nominated and appointed as a Justice of the Peace. But the merchants were as vindictive as ever. He took part in a stormy election and denounced the merchants for making exorbitant profits. In revenge they briefed a solicitor who appeared before the local court and demanded that he should be put under rule of bail to be of good conduct in the future. Proceedings were taken under an old Act of Edward III. Gallagher stepped down from the Bench and was judged as an offender. His judges were 5 traders who were bitterly opposed to the co-operative movement. The Resident Magistrate—the only one with legal training—refused to agree with their hostile verdict. Gallagher would not give bail and so was committed to gaol. He stayed in Derry Gaol exactly 3 days when a telegram arrived saying, "Release Patrick Gallagher J. P. of Dungloe immediately. By Order of the Lord Justices."

He owed his release to Father Finlay who, as soon as he read of the case, went to Dublin Castle and presented the facts to the 4 Lord Justices. Father Finlay was most indignant and demanded that Gallagher should be set free.

On his return to Dungloe, Patrick Gallagher, to his surprise, was met with bands, banners, and blazing bonfires along the route. One enthusiast lit a tar barrel just in front of his door and if the wind had blown the wrong way his house would have been burnt down. Among his supporters was Mrs. Gardiner, wife of the local doctor, who had arranged for Gallagher to be brought home. For revenge the local traders brought a new young doctor into the district and every one in debt to them had to have their doctor.

If Patrick Gallagher had been left to build up his co-operative movement without interference it might have progressed quietly and slowly. But his unjust imprisonment gave just that touch of drama and excitement that the venture required. Soon the Templecrone Co-operative Society was the biggest concern in the district. They acquired their hosiery factory and their boats; their production and their trade increasing in range and importance year by year. At the centre—after many years—is still the genial figure of "Paddy the Cope," a man of character and capacity, able to laugh at himself and his efforts as well as to make a stand for what he believes to be right.

The significant facts of his career are not to be confined to a small patch of Irish mountainside. For his achievements add up to that substance of human freedom for which poets, philosophers and thinkers have struggled through many generations.

R. M. Fox

THE VIKRAM ERA

THE EVIDENCE OF ETYMOLOGY

[It is an interesting thesis which **Shri V. K. Panthulu** of the Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, defends here. It may disappoint the believers in the tradition of the great Vikramaditya to be offered an astronomical period in exchange for a mortal king, but the prospect which Shri Panthulu holds out of an era of peace and prosperity following the present era of aggression is a tempting one. Whether or not, however, such an era of relative prosperity arrives in the Kali Yuga, lightening in a measure its darkness, depends upon mankind.—ED.]

The historians are still searching evidences of the legendary Vikramaditya who, according to them, must have ruled at Ujjain just about 2005 years ago. They are greatly vexed with the utter lack of historical sense of the ancients (of India) who have left no authentic records of such a great king to gladden their historical hearts. But in fact Bacon's dictum that " history makes men wise " has been falsified in the case of the gullible modern historians, and therefore it is no wonder that they have found no evidences of their hero so far.

Lay readers, who have no reputations as historians at stake, and no exaggerated notions about the " modern methods " of historical research, are requested to consider the following facts :

The Vikram Era is an astronomical period and has nothing to do with any mortal king of the name of Vikramaditya, notwithstanding all the interesting legends extant about a king of that name, which we all enjoy, and notwithstanding also, what some Hindu fanatics may insist upon believing and saying about their dream-king.

Vikram-Aditya is one of the *Dwadasa Adityas* or the 12 sun-periods which together make up the great cycle of 25,000 years, said to be the period of one complete cycle of the precession of the equinoxes. This great cycle is divided into the usual 12 signs of the zodiac, and the period of precession in each sign, which works out roughly at 2,100 years, is called one *Aditya* or *Sun* (period). At present the precession is said to be in the sign of Pisces or the fish. The ruling planet of this sign is the dominant Jupiter, which is said to vest those under its influence with the quality of domineering. *Vikram-Aditya* means the " Valorous Sun." There is no *Vikram* (valour) without *Akram* (*Ana*) (aggression). In plain language, therefore, the era of Vikramaditya means " The period of the Sun during which aggression in the world is the main feature." The Sun is aggressive or valorous in the sense in which the pillow may

be said to be sleepless. The history of the world for the last 2,000 years stands as witness to this fact. It has been a period of domination, large-scale aggression, feudalism and empires.

In the legends, Vikramaditya was permitted by the Mahakali of Ujjain to rule for 2,000 years, after which he was defeated and was succeeded by Sali-Vahana. The meaning should be plain. Sali-Vahana, or the pot-bearer, is no other than Kumbha or Aquarius, who is symbolized as pouring the cool waters of peace and prosperity on the earth, no doubt parched and made thirsty previously by Vikramaditya, the Valorous or Aggressive Sun. In the cycle of precessions, after the period of Meena, Pisces or the Fish, follows the period of Kumbha, Sali-Vahana or Aquarius, the pot-bearer. So, according to the old symbolism, the period of Vikramaditya or the Aggressive Sun is drawing to a close (2005 years out of a total of about 2100 years having passed) and the period of the life-giving and peaceful Aquarius or Sali-Vahana, the pot-bearer, is in the offing.

Perhaps some would point out that we have been having a Sali-Vahana Era running concurrently with the Vikram Era for over 1,800 years and that the theory of one era following the other after 2,100 years is not borne out by the traditions of the existing concurrent eras. The only explanation which suggests itself for this fact is that, while the ancients did agree about the length of the Sun periods and their order of succession, they differed in their opinion as to the exact time when one period ended and the other began. The school of astronomers who started the Sali-Vahana Era must have been of the opinion that the precession of the equinoxes had already moved out of Pisces into Aquarius. How they could arrive at such a wide margin of difference in the calculation of the periods is a question for which perhaps Astronomers could try to find an answer.

One more point. Vikramaditya is said to have ruled at Ujjain. The presiding deities of Ujjain, most appropriately, are Maha-Kala and his spouse Maha-Kali, which both mean "Great Time" in the masculine or feminine gender, as one may choose. According to the traditions, therefore, at Ujjain the place of the ancient observatory, under the ægis of Maha-Kali, the Great Time (25,000 years), Vikramaditya the Aggressive Sun, ruled for 2,000 (2,100) years and was defeated and was succeeded by Sali-Vahana, Aquarius.

The method by which Sali-Vahana defeated Vikramaditya was, surprisingly enough, most ultra-modern. According to the legends, the former was a potter's grandson. In his boyhood he received the best education available in those days. In his spare time he made millions of clay models of elephants, horses, camels, foot-soldiers, *i.e.*, all the items which go to make up a huge army, and laid them safely by. On attain-

ing manhood he entered service as Minister to a feudatory Chief subordinate to Vikramaditya. When his secret preparations were ready he advised his Chief to refuse to pay the annual tribute to Vikramaditya, the overlord, who, as expected, came down with an army to subdue the truculent chief. At this psychological moment, the legend says, Sali-Vahana by his magic put motion into his *robot* army of clay models and directed it against Vikramaditya, who was completely taken by surprise and fled. The legend also says that, before death, Vikramaditya realized that the 2,000 years of his reign preordained by the Maha-Kali of Ujjain had come to a close and so yielded without a struggle. Compare this account with things happening around us. If the meaning of the Vikram Era as stated above, is accepted, it may be noticed that it has less than 100 years to run and that the Sali-Vahana Era is round the corner. The dawn of that Era is foreshadowed by the following Reuter despatch predicting war waged by *robot* soldiers :—

"ROBOT" SOLDIERS

OTTAWA. Feb. 12.—"Robots" will replace the infantry "foot-sloggers" in the next war, just as the tank replaced the horse in World War I, according to Dr. H. M. Solandt, Chairman of the Canadian Defence Research Board. Instead of Tommy Atkins "Private Robot," equipped with artificial hearing, sight, touch, smell, sensitivity to pressure changes and the ability to make decisions, will fire the guns, man the ships and fly the planes, sending reports and receiving orders by radio, he said.

Dr. Solandt said his soldiers will remain cool and collected under heavy fire. Scientists already know how to produce such "men" and it only remains for engineers to build them.

They will see by television, infra-red light to pierce fog or darkness, and will be sensitive to changes in light, sound or pressure. They may be equipped with a sense of smell, and will have electronic nerves, memories and judgment.—P. T. I.—Reuter."

Here is evidence, historical enough, for those who will see!

V. K. PANTHULU

I see a new religion, founded on confidence in man, calling upon the unspoiled sentiments that are lying asleep in us, believing that we can love good for itself without any idea of recompense and that the divine principle is in us.

—SOLTER

THE SIMILE OF THE ACTOR IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

[It is an interesting aspect of the portrayal of the actor simile in Indian philosophy which **Shri H. A. Dharmadhikari** has presented in this essay. But there is another aspect of it which is no less warranted by the ancient Indian teachings on Karma and Reincarnation, which aspect was thus defined by Madame H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* :—

Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma, then, is the law of re-birth, or of the re-incarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours. The *inner*, or real man, who personates those characters, knows the whole time that he is Hamlet for the brief space of a few acts, which represent, however, on the plane of human illusion the whole life of Hamlet. And he knows that he was, the night before, King Lear, the transformation in his turn of the Othello of a still earlier preceding night; but the outer, visible character is supposed to be ignorant of the fact. In actual life that ignorance is, unfortunately, but too real. Nevertheless, the *permanent* individuality is fully aware of the fact, though, through the atrophy of the "spiritual" eye in the physical body, that knowledge is unable to impress itself on the consciousness of the false personality.

—Ed.]

" All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players. "

—*As You Like It* (Act II, Sc. 7)

" Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.... "

—*Macbeth* (Act V, Sc. 5)

Indian philosophical literature abounds in similes comparing the man of the world to an actor. This worldly man is, in the eyes of a philosopher, a creature of circumstances, destined to act by some unknown, mysterious force until he destroys all his previous *Karmans* and achieves *Mokṣa*, the final liberation of the soul.

A true Vedāntin looks upon this universe as a creation of *Māyā*. To him life—or this world—is like a drama in which man is simply an actor. The simile of an actor is given to emphasize the truth of the Brahman as the eternal substratum—in fact, the only reality underlying this phenomenal world.

In the *Brahma Sūtras*, we find this simile in the *Sūtra* " *Yukteh Śabdāntarachcha*" (*Br. Sutra* II. 1. 18), and in the *Śārīraka-Bhashya* of Shri Shankarāchārya there is another by the learned Āchārya. Thus :—

Tathā Mūlakāraṇameva ā antyāt
Kāryāt tena tena

Kāryā Kāraṇa naṭavat-sarva-vyava-rāspadatvam pratipadyate.

[In the same manner, the original cause (of the world) deserves to be the place—the resort—of all dealings, *like an actor* right up to the final *Kārya* or effect in the shape (or form) of the respective change (*Kārya*).]

Here Brahman, the fundamental cause of the world, is said to act in the form of the *Kārya* or effect right up to the end of the world and yet to be that into which all worldly proceedings are resolved, like an actor who plays different rôles at different times.

The learned Āchārya again gives the simile of the actor in a philosophical verse of his famous *Śataślokee.* Thus :—

" Matvā Streeveshadhārī Stryahamiti kurute kim Naṭo bharturiccham ?"

(Does an actor in the garb of a woman wish to have a husband, thinking himself to be a woman in reality ?)

Just as a man who plays the part of a woman in a dramatic performance does not really wish to have a husband, so the soul, being distinct from the body in which it dwells, remains unattached to the latter. A wise man should, therefore, realize that his worldly actions are all ephemeral and should not indulge in worldly interests.

In the *Sāmkhya-Kārikā* of Īsvara Krishna, there is a similar reference, though from a different viewpoint :—

As a dancer desists from dancing, having exhibited herself to the audience, so does Primal Nature (*Prakriti*) desist, having exhibited herself to Spirit (*Purusha*).

Nature, according to the *Sānkhyas*, is entirely different from Spirit and the final liberation of the Soul depends upon the realization of Its separation from the material world. *Prakṛti* sees to this. Like an actor she charms the Soul, but when It has gained discriminative knowledge there is nothing to prompt Nature to act and she stops her dance. For, if the dance of Nature (evolution) did not cease but continued to be perceived by Spirit, there would be no release (*Moksha*) at all.

We find a similar reference in the verses of Bhartṛhari, styled *Vairāgya Śataka :—*

Jarājīrṇairangair, Naṭa iva, valīmaṇditatanuḥ Naraḥ Samsārānte viśati Yamadhānījavanikām.

That is to say, a man retires behind the curtain or wing of the stage (representing the abode of Death, Yama), at the end of his life, when his body becomes crippled and the limbs are worn-out with old age, like an actor who retires from the stage at the end of his performance.

Thus, to emphasize the Reality of the Divine Spirit and the unreality of this attractive and multifarious but material world, poets and philosophers have used the simile of the actor for Man as a creature of God, in whose name he is to act in a dispassionate spirit.

H. A. DHARMADHIKARI

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

GANDHIJI, THE PEACE MAKER *

The Navajivan Publishing House is continually adding to its already long list of Gandhian publications. One notes with pleasure a steady improvement in the quality of publications, particularly with regard to the format.

A Pilgrimage for Peace is the first of a series of "forestudies to the full-dress biography" that Shri Pyarelal is writing of Gandhiji. It gives a good foretaste of what the biography will be. For it is a well-documented and very ably written account of Gandhiji's extended visit to the North-West Frontier Province in the autumn of 1938. The early chapters give briefly but vividly the historical and geographical setting of this problem-Province, "this witches' cauldron where trouble was always brewing," which, however, has become the scene of a new portent, the emergence of the non-violent Pathan. The author points out that non-violence was not an exotic growth in this Province, for the flower of Buddhism had flourished there for over a thousand years. Two of the later chapters deal with the significance of this past, and present Gandhiji amidst the ruins of Taxila. But the interest of the book is more in the present and the future of this Province.

Gandhiji undertook this pilgrimage with a great hope and for a great purpose. The hope was that he might find in the Pathan, "with the lawlessness of centuries in his blood," the non-violence of the brave; and the purpose was to help Badshah Khan lay the foundations for a determined effort to work that transformation. Consequently his talks at gatherings, mainly of *Khudai Kidmatgars*, constitute the most systematic and comprehensive exposition of the theory and technique of non-violence that Gandhiji ever gave. And the shadow of Munich under which the tour was undertaken gave an international slant to these utterances, embodying his answer to the challenge of brute force.

But, alas, the great experiment could not be carried out as planned by the two apostles of non-violence. The Epilogue tells of the tragic happenings in India and the world at large after 1939, and of how Badshah Khan's work has been largely undone in Pakistan, where he himself is confined in prison.

This Peace-Pilgrimage is a significant chapter in the life of the Mahatma and the present book is valuable in itself as "a guide-book for the practice of non-violence." The author has appended a series of extracts from Gandhiji's writings, which give in a connected form a complete outline of the Science of Satyagraha.

But no biography of Gandhiji can do full justice to the manifoldness of his interests and the winsomeness of his personality. These can be brought out and preserved only by pen-pictures and anecdotes presented by those privileged

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* *A Pilgrimage for Peace*. By PYARELAL. (Rs. 5/-); *Stray Glimpses of Bapu*. By KAKA KALELKAR. (Rs. 3/-); *Gandhian Ethics*. By BENOY GOPAL RAY. (Re. 1/-). (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad).

to have moved in the closest association with the Master. A few such have already been published. Kaka Kalelkar, one of Gandhiji's earliest and closest associates in India, has presented us, in *Stray Glimpses of Bapu*, with a rosary of 101 beads. They are sidelights on Bapu's life and reveal the man behind the politician and the leader. His devotion to duty, his attention to details, his tender care for the lowliest of his co-workers, his child-like dependence on the Unseen Power from whom he drew all his strength—all these and many other aspects of that unique personality are depicted in unforgettable word sketches drawn with the artlessness of great art. The beads are strung together at random, with no effort at chronological arrangement. The impression given is that the author has plenty more of such beads in his repertoire. If nothing but another period of imprisonment will induce Kakasaheb to complete the collection and to arrange them in chronological order, then the Government of India must find some pretext for giving him that enforced rest in jail!

Shri Benoy Gopal Ray of Santiniketan has attempted a critique of Gandhism in his *Gandhian Ethics*. The treatment is critical and the manner that of the College Lecturer. His main contention is that, great as Gandhiji's achievements are, they have been on the ethical plane, which falls short of the highest, the spiritual. This compartmentalization of values seems unsound and certainly does not do justice to the wholeness and integrity of Gandhiji's life, which was rooted in spirituality. In the cold, analytical treatment of the author, the glow and warmth of Gandhiji's achievements seem to be lost. But, as the Publisher says in his Note, the value of such studies "lies in that they stimulate thought and raise questions that may be helpful in understanding better Gandhiji and his life and philosophy."

S. K. GEORGE

Light of India, Message of Mahatmaji. By M. S. DESHPANDE, M.A., Foreword by G. V. MAVLANKAR. (Sole Agents: Hind Kitabs Ltd., Bombay 1. xxiv-293 pp. 1950. Rs. 6/8).

So many were the facets of the almost super-human career of the world figure, Mahatma Gandhi, that the soft light radiating from his prismatic personality, shed a ray of hope into the heart of every unit of suffering humanity, whatever his or her station in life might be. There were few life-problems that he did not study, few interests that he neglected, few oppressed ones that he did not champion. The lot of the *Daridra Narayan*, whether a village peasant or a city worker, the uplift of Indian womanhood, the removal of untouchability, dietetics, hygiene and sanitation,—these are but a few of the many problems that claimed his time and energy. He strove simultaneously for the political freedom, the social amelioration, the educational advancement, the economic betterment, the religious elevation and spiritual progress of his countrymen and of humanity in general. In fact, his heroic and breath-taking achievements as a leader in the struggle of his country for freedom, are apt to deflect attention from the true source of his greatness. The thread that ran through all the pearls of his achievements was that of a spiritual life. He had an

indomitable faith in the eternal verities, *viz.*, Truth and Non-violence. His journey through life was a pilgrim's progress. Spiritual and moral values were the foundation of the multi-lateral superstructure of his thoughts, the realities behind the diverse appearances of his preachings, the substance shaded by his ever increasing and numerous activities.

No wonder then that although there are many biographies of Mahatma Gandhi's heroic figure, this study of his life, which focusses the attention of the reader on the spiritual core of his being, must indeed be thrice welcome. Particularly so in view of the fact that during the latter part of his life, Mahatmaji emphasized more and more the limitations of mere intellect in moments of crisis; the subservience of his patriotism to his religion; and revealed the mystic bent of his mind in his reliance upon the "still small voice within" whenever he was in the doldrums of indecision.

Mr. Deshpande's book is so admirable that he has achieved two remarkable results:—(1) He presents a very clear analysis of the Message of the Mahatma as an aspirant to Moksha or God-realization. Considered in this light, the book is a very neat and compact manual, full of practical hints for the repentant sinner, the spiritual aspirant and for the ordinary man who does not want to lose his spiritual bearings in the inevitable daily struggle for existence. At the same time, when the author describes the Message in words and phrases such as: "The Inner Voice, the Voice of God"; "God speaks through events"; "Rules of restraint based on experience" and "Rama-nama has ever been my saviour"; he does signal service to the sacred memory of Mahatmaji and gladdens the hearts of his followers by marshalling evidence that must place him among the saints of all times and climes.

(2) The social aspect of the Message has not been neglected. The nature of the Universal Harmony visualized by Mahatmaji and the factors necessary for its existence, which were emphasized by him, have been placed clearly before the reader—more especially for a social worker—for his future guidance. Thus the brilliant ideas of Mahatmaji regarding proper education, the best in art, the spirit of *Swadeshi*, the effective use of *Satyagraha*, and the real nature of *Swaraj*, have all been dealt with, with precision and completeness.

Thus, the author has presented the two-fold Goal and Path of Gandhiji:—God-realization and Universal Harmony. He has given an integrated view of Mahatmaji's philosophy of life, so very essential to the benighted traveller on the thorny Path of Progress. All in all, in the opinion of the reviewer, this small book is unique in the originality of its design and the objectivity of its analysis. It succeeds remarkably in fulfilling the expectations raised by its title, because (and this may be taken as a personal opinion) it appears that the author is himself a sincere *Sadhaka* (a spiritual aspirant).

V. M. APTE

The Greeks and Their Gods. (388 pp. 21s.); *The Greek Philosophers from Thales to Aristotle.* (168 pp. 5s.). Both by W. K. C. GUTHRIE. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 1950).

It is a testimony to Dr. Guthrie's ability as a scholar that he has shown himself capable of writing both a learned and illuminating treatise on the Greek Gods, designed primarily for scholars, and an effective and simply presented account of the Greek philosophers for home students. Taken in conjunction, the two works provide us with a valuable picture of the dark and primitive realm of experience out of which Greek civilization was brought into being, and of the brilliantly defined system of ideas which it developed by "becoming separated off" (in the phrase of Herodotus) from its cultural past. The results were so dazzling and powerful that they have determined the development of the Western world down to our own time.

Yet it is now becoming plain that there were dangers latent in the intellectual achievements of the Greeks with which we today, as the remote inheritors of their culture, find ourselves increasingly obliged to reckon. Although rationalism has a great service to perform in the economy of the spirit, its exponents are in constant danger of losing touch with the deep realities which are the occasion of their plausible abstractions. And of the Greeks it may be said that, although they did undoubtedly sublimate, as we should now say, the chthonian impulses of their primitive forebears, and create Olympian gods out of more elementary and obscure figures, they did not achieve in a full measure that synthesis between the rational and the emotional which is essential for really creative living. Their genius was too speculative for them to be able to do full justice to the more mystical and feminine elements in our human experience.

And now in the present century we are finding that we have had to pay a heavy price for being unduly fascinated by their rationalism. For we have exposed ourselves to a violent and disturbing protest from the "Unconscious," and have been obliged, since the beginning of this century, to expend a great deal of our energy in exploring the dim but potent realm of the archaic, the psychic and the elemental in order to discover the roots and origin of our neuroses. It proves, after all, not to be so easy to disengage oneself "from foolish and simple notions" as Herodotus once imagined.

As far as this element in the situation is concerned, one has to confess that Dr. Guthrie's attitude is disappointing. For he accepts quite uncritically the conception of the primitive's relation to reality which is embraced by practically all orthodox scholars. The laws of magic are "such as we have ceased to believe in"; savages connect things together "in what we regard as an unreasonable way." Sympathetic magic is a mere matter of superstition. And so on. Yet it should surely be plain that modern developments in psychotherapy and psychical research are making it more and more impossible for us to accept these simplifications. This defect, however, is a minor consideration in relation to the importance of the contribution to Hellenic studies which is made in these two books.

LAWRENCE HYDE

Beauty and Expression. By M. M. SHARIF, M.A. (Cantab.). (Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, Pakistan. 133 pp. 1949. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

So challenging a theory of æsthetics as Benedetto Croce's was bound to meet with ridicule from some and counter-claims from others. Professor Sharif defends him from the first, but rejects several of Croce's propositions with cogent arguments. This book is a remarkably lucid presentation and a partial refutation of Croce's theory, so interesting that the reviewer begrudged the 6 pages missed out by the binder from the Introduction.

Croce's theory, summarized here, holds that beauty is essentially expression, spontaneous imaginative outpouring, art, as a creative activity being independent of considerations of morality and of logical validity. The artist's vision is a complete work of art, and statues, pictures, etc., are only externalizations or records of it.

Among Croce's propositions which Professor Sharif partially or wholly rejects are that perception is posterior to æsthetic imagination, that there are no degrees of beauty, no progress in art and no kinds of beauty. But Professor Sharif's presentation is much more than a refutation. His argument, for example, for various kinds of beauty, includes a thoughtful and instructive differentiation between classic and romantic expression, tragedy and comedy, etc., an exhaustive analysis of laughter-situations and other points of value.

His contention for progress in art seems sound. He holds that, as between two "adequate" expressions, the greater æsthetic value will be found in that produced by the more developed personality—developed intellectually, morally and æsthetically.

E. M. H.

The City of Two Gateways: The Autobiography of an Indian Girl. By SAVITRI DEVI NANDA. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 278 pp. 1950. 16*s.*)

"Some God has given the power to snatch the living moments from the past."

To Savitri Devi Nanda, at any rate, this power has been given in ample measure, and out of this power she has coined the pages of her candid and convincing autobiography. It is the record of the life of a sensitive Punjabi girl, but by necessary implication the story covers also family life and school life, and even the sinuous ramifications of the social life of the aristocracy of the modern Punjab.

Social life has been aptly compared to an invisible yet life-giving underground river, the roaring floods above the earth surface being the eddy and confusion of political life. In Savitri Devi Nanda's autobiography we have, as it were, an X-ray photograph of a section of this underground river which both explains and offers a palliative to the more visible muddy waters above.

All the old-world beauty of ancient Hindu culture—all of it that has defied Time and has managed triumphantly to live on—is recaptured by Savitri Devi Nanda, and so her book becomes in fact an essay, a piece of embroidery, in which are woven together the many strands of our living traditions, the principles that should govern wise living and the manners that should render such wise living beautiful

at the same time. With a disarming naïveté, but also with compelling sincerity, Savitri Devi Nanda extracts from her memory's hidden chambers the "living moments from the past" and embalms and gives permanence to them with the magical power of her artless speech. The nicknames—the Sly One, the Smiling One, the Squandering One, the Biter, the Tusker—seem to stick to their originals with a strange tenacity, and give an adhesive quality to the clan as a whole.

The pictures of forlorn childhood and of life in the delightful hot-house of the boarding-school are drawn surely, with a touch of lingering sadness, it is true, yet also with love; and, being glimpsed now through the film of the receding years, the sadness and the love both acquire a romantic, even a nostalgic, hue. Besides, Savitri Devi Nanda has insinuated in her pages the slow but remorseless dynamics of change—the stratification of conventions, their cracking and breaking, the surge of new life and the fearless careering towards new horizons.

In Savitri Devi Nanda's own life are comprehended both conformity to living traditions and revolt against dead conventions, and thus her autobiography may almost be described as proto-typical of the ardours, agitations, agonies, heart-searchings and tireless strivings of an entire generation. *The City of Two Gateways*, then, is somewhat of a testament of modern Indian youth, a prose epic of the slow unfolding of the personality of young resurgent India.

K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar

Education for Peace. By Herbert Read. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., London. 131 pp. 1950. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

Over 150 years ago William Godwin observed, "The true object of education, like that of every other moral process, is the generation of happiness." The author expatiates on this thesis, bringing out the full implications of the term, "moral process." He has great faith in æsthetic education which, according to him, imbues the individual with a sense of the beautiful in Nature and in Life, on the one hand, and, on the other, confers on him the capacity to translate his perception of the beautiful into a pattern of goodness. So detailed and deep is Mr. Read's analysis of the æsthetic motive and process that he might as well have given to his book the title "Anatomy of Æsthetics."

From morality to peace is but one step. Therefore, a passionate plea is made here for the pursuit of Art in an atmosphere of spontaneity and interiorly imposed self-discipline. Such a pursuit, Herbert Read believes, will divert the aggressive or destructive instinct in the young—who are our only hope in a world governed by blind advocates of the atom bomb—into creative, harmonious and socially co-operative activity. Thus, a kind of a moral-*cum*-physical equivalent for war would be provided.

> We must give priority in our education to all forms of æsthetic activity, for in the course of making beautiful things, there will take place a crystallization of the emotions into patterns which are the moulds of virtues. Such patterns are in effect social patterns, the patterns assumed by human relationships, and their harmony is part of the universal harmony made manifest in life no less than in art.

An indispensable book for educationists and artists.

G. M.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

" _____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

An original thinker, a man who does his own evaluating of circumstances and developments, is sufficiently rare in our day of run-of-the-mine opinions and second-hand thoughts to make his mark upon his times and leave the world the poorer for his passing. Such an iconoclast as Bernard Shaw would have been intolerable without his scintillating humour. The middle-class mind, which is that of the majority, quite independently of economic status, will resist fiercely any serious attempt to shatter the mould in which it is imprisoned. The dragging out of family skeletons is bitterly resented unless the reformer possesses, like Shaw, the ability to make them, as he put it, " dance. "

He used against the evils and the follies of our time a whimsical satire that made men laugh but also made them think. He was a staunch advocate of tolerance, of social justice, of vegetarianism and of total abstinence, and an unrelenting foe of vivisection, of medical pretensions, of blood sports and of superstition.

The promotion of mutual sympathy and understanding between East and West is prominent among the aims of THE ARYAN PATH. It should be served also by the quarterly magazine, *East and West*, which was launched a few months ago by the Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East (Palazza Brancaccio, Via Merulana 248, Rome). This illustrated journal, published in English, is inspired by the conviction of the necessity for mutual understanding between Asia and Europe, " destined, by the swift course of events, to collaborate...in writing a new history, in attaining new ideals of civilization." Thus writes the Editor, Prof. Giuseppe Tucci, whose work as an Orientalist is well known. His connection with the Institute is a guarantee of able work which we hope will be regularly and punctually executed for the benefit of the thinking world. The first issue contains interesting articles on Oriental studies in Italy during the last decade, on Italian fiction, art and motion pictures of the present day, on the agrarian reform in China, on Chinese painting, and on Indian Tantrism.

The Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente is sponsoring a number of other cultural activities, including free courses in Hindi, Urdu and other Eastern languages, discussion meetings on Eastern problems, the publication of the works of Italian travellers to the East and of Italian Orientalists, lectures, an exhibition of Chinese paintings, etc.; and an Italo-Indian Centre and other Centres are to be established to foster understanding between Italy and individual countries.

To facilitate Easterners' subscribing to *East and West*, the equivalent of $2.00 (U.S.A.) may be sent in books to be designated on inquiry.

The Institute and its quarterly journal have our cordial good wishes, as they will those of all friends of a united world.

An interesting comment on India is made by Dr. Lin Yutang in the leading article in the Summer *Rider's Review*, "Gandhi Was a Saint." He finds in Gandhiji's joining of politics and religion the accomplishment of an almost superhuman task and pays somewhat puzzled tribute to the "absolute faith in the efficacy of moral power," of which "Gandhi's whole life has become a living example and a symbol." But Gandhiji, he is sure, was a phenomenon that could have been produced only in India. The masses too had to believe in the power of good over evil, or he could not have reached his position of public leadership.

> In a country where people believe in the power of good over evil on Sundays, and the power of evil over good between Monday and Saturday, that is obviously impossible.... From my study of Indian philosophy, it seems to me that Indians believe in the conservation of effects of human action and the indestructibility of the spirit, as Westerners talk about the conservation of energy and indestructibility of matter.

This is an astute observation, no less well founded than Dr. Lin Yutang's conviction that so strong was Gandhiji's faith in the eventual victory of the good that he would have rejected the offer of earlier freedom for India at the price of compromise on his moral principles. That would have been in harmony with the *Kathopanishad's* indication that the man is wise who, faced with choosing between "the better and the dearer," lets the dearer go. But it was not only his background of Hindu tradition but also his own moral maturity that gave Gandhiji "the courage to bet on the morally right against the politically expedient."

Dr. Lin Yutang believes that all Gandhiji's teachings on love and selflessness and non-violence put together "will not produce more than a tiny ripple in the ocean of modern thought." They are, alas, obviously uncongenial to its leading trends. But what cannot command impartial hearing from the reason may gain the assent of man's consciousness through the heart. Dr. Lin Yutang concludes on the note that

> Gandhi's life and example, which gave meaning and force to the doctrine of moral power, shine with such a pristine clarity that men for ages to come will reflect upon his example and its meaning.

An important brochure recently published in the series of Unesco studies of the technological and sociological questions affecting "Press and Radio in the World Today" deals with "Professional Training of Journalists." In this study Dr. Robert Desmond, Chairman of the Department of Journalism at the University of California, points out the value of professional training for producing not only efficiency but also objectivity in the presentation of facts. He also surveys developments in such training throughout the world.

The late C. P. Scott's dictum which he quotes: "Comment is free: facts are sacred" implies more than mere abstention from distortion of facts. No less objectionable, Dr. Desmond maintains, is the selection of certain elements and the suppression of other relevant ones, conveying a misleading impression. He characterizes such irresponsible journalism as "a swindle perpetrated on the public mind and so a crime against humanity." Constructive interpretation of the facts is legitimate, but the news and editorial functions should be kept distinct.

> ...in a world so filled with complexities and tensions, the journalist who treats his public responsibilities lightly is like a madman playing with fire in a warehouse of explosives.

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